

The voice of Kalimpong

Rs.5/-

Himalayan Times

Kalimpong

Vol. 2 • Issue 7 • March 2005

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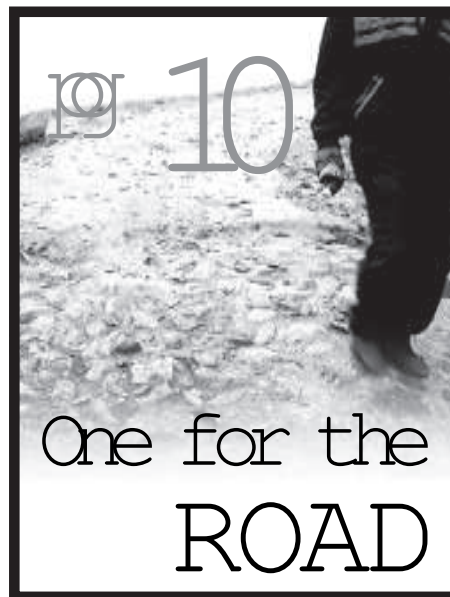
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— A Prodigy



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One for the
ROAD



EDITORIAL

Of all the news that was generated from Kalimpong in the past few weeks, including all the talks about 91 days of strikes and the long due crackdown on drugs, the one about a five month old baby with a smashed up head being found near 10 ½ mile was most distressing.

We had all heard of this sort of incidents occurring in the cities and had always thought of this a phenomena associated with the larger towns and cities but the very fact that the same has actually happened in our very back yard is too shocking to believe. Kalimpong stands stunned to find that someone amongst ourselves could be so cruel as to stifle the life of an innocent five month old baby for no fault of its own.

Kalimpong is that place where the Missionaries of Charity have a big presence and have done a lot of work in bringing solace to the poor and needy. It is that place where the Scottish and the Roman Priests have spent life times working for the upliftment of the masses, it is that place where Buddhist monks and gurus have invested resources so that misery to the inhabitants are limited, it is that place where the Pranamis have opened ashrams and orphanages so that our parentless children are taken care of- how then and why then should anyone throw away a baby which has done no wrong??? Why should the baby have been killed if the fault is of the parents???

And to think of it this is not the first time such an incident has taken place, previously too a similar incident was reported from the Motor Stand and one from a drain above Mela Ground. Such incidents defy logic and shake our faith in the very fiber of what constitutes a civil society. Kalimpong needs to do a rethink and ensure such shameful incidents so not take place again!!!

Dear Editor,

Our beautiful Kalimpong is going downhill by leaps and bounds, to join all the other hills stations of India that have turned into slums. Though to lack of town planning, ugly buildings are rearing their heads everyday, everywhere, indiscriminately to satisfy man's greed.

Pollution is rising not due to industry but petrol and diesel fumes emitted by over population of motor vehicles. The town area has turned into a concrete jungle. The only lung it is left with is the Mela Ground.

We lost the other lung, Bamkim Park, long ago, to the Government College to satisfy the ego of the leaders of the stronger political party back then. There was an abundance of suitable land available else where but our one and only Park was taken over instead.

Now the public are ecologically aware so I hope, they will oppose the hair brained scheme, to turn our beloved historical, entertainment centre, the Mela Ground into a greasy fume laden Taxi Stand.

We would rather have our Mela Ground intact than cars in Kalimpong.

Monila De

Dear Sir,

Reference is made to the article written by Advocate Mr. Anmole Prasad creating awareness to the problems of Kalimpong is very much appreciable. While sharing his views, I would like to suggest people from every walk of life to come forward for the upliftment of Kalimpong Town. It is the responsibility of intellectuals, businessmen, students, Taxi owners, senior citizens, Political Leaders from all Parties, Govt. officials, and all the NGOS like Lions Club, Rotary Club to work for beautification of Kalimpong Town, making eco-friendly and pollution free, to reduce Traffic congestion to prevent wastage of water and electricity, for the sanitation and proper disposal of waste.

Through the column of Himalayan Times, I request the people of Kalimpong come together to make Kalimpong a beautiful Town.

C.M. Purkuti

DO YOU HAVE ANY THING THAT
YOU WANT TO SHARE WITH THE REST OF

KALIMPONG ???

HAVE YOUR SAY AT YOUR
PAGE

PARIL LEPCHA

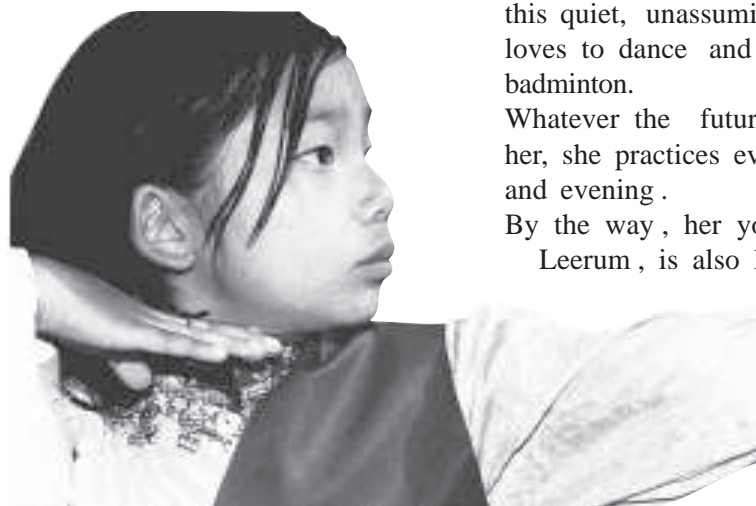
— A Prodigy — By Staff Correspondent

She is 13 year old and loves to watch Cartoon Network, Tom and Jerry' being her favourite cartoon characters.

Meet Paril lepcha, whose collection of medals and certificates could turn anyone green with envy.

Recently, she was in the news when she won the gold medals in the 25th Sub- Junior National Archery Championship held at New Delhi. Winning at the national level, and that too at such a young age is no mean feat and her powers with the bow and arrow shows that she is here to stay. She also participated and won at various tournaments like the National Vanavasi Archery Championship, State School Archery Championship, etc.

A resident of Bong Busty, Paril is studying at Mt. Carmel School in Std. VIII. She is coached by her parents who have also participated in national level archery competitions. Her father, Chujang Lepcha is a diver in the Customs Department




at Darjeeling while mother Lakit is a housewife. Reaching the national level, she says, was not easy and it took hard work and sheer determination to come out with flying colours. She wishes to be the National Coach in the long run, and her parents are fully supporting her to achieve her goal. One thing, which may act as a hindrance is fund. "Paril needs a fiber bow," says her mother. "Many organizations and people are extending help, for which we are thankful, but even this is not enough," She says.

But success comes at a price. Paril failed to clear her examinations last year and was detained. However, all is not lost and she says that she will pass this year's examination. "Both", she asserts, when asked whether education or success held importance for her. And hear this too... She is also trained in martial arts and has acquired a green belt, though she has quit practicing it. Apart from that, this quiet, unassuming girl also loves to dance and play badminton.

Whatever the future holds for her, she practices every morning and evening.

By the way, her younger sister, Leerum, is also learning the art of archery.

Hopefully, we will see more of her in the future. 



Andrew Pradhan
DoB 30th January 2004

PARIL'S FUTURE IN PERIL

Having won the National Sub-Junior Archery Championship last year Paril has proved that she has got in her to someday become not just the toast of the town but of the county. But talent alone is not enough, she needs to upgrade her equipments so that she can shoot her way to a place in the National squad. Her present day bamboo bow and arrows is good enough for local level tournaments but for competing in the National level she needs at least a modern day fiber bow which does not come cheap.

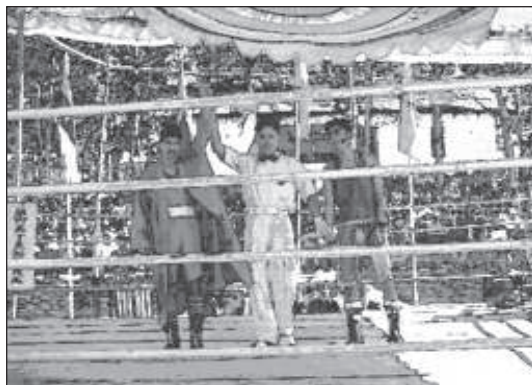
Her family's modest earning is insufficient to fully support her career- which means if you do not step in, her bright career could end up like one of those stray arrows. Help Paril achieve her dreams by supporting her financially.

Please contact her extended family in the following numbers for further details- 259836, 98320 96646, 9832093746.

BLACK CAT DIVISION INTER BATTALION BOXING

To encourage sports, **Black Cat Division** of the Army had organized a Inter Battalion Boxing Championship at Rhenock recently. The Championship was participated by more than 200 boxers comprising of 17 teams from the entire **Black Cat Division**.


The competition was organized as per IABF rules and regulations. Mr Manoj Limbu an international referee was chief referee and Mr TB Rai, a member of IABF was one of the jury. Hav Sanjeev Singh of 14 JAK RIF, silver Medalist in Super Heavy Weight Category during 52nd



Senior National Boxing championship held at Hissar was the main attraction of the local crowd.

The championship was keenly attended by large number of locals. The participation of large number of civilians clearly reflected the goodwill and cooperation between Army and locals.

Fierce Fourteen JAK RIF with 38 points emerged as the winners of this closely contested championship with 1/3 GR with 31 points as the runners up.

Rifleman Subash Singh of 14 JAK RIF was adjudged the Best Boxer of the Championship and Rifleman Prem Bahadur Rana of 1/3 GR was adjudged the best loser. 

cartoon



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ROTARY'S BIRTH GIFT TO KALIMPONG

by Anup Moktan

Rotary Club of Kalimpong dedicated the newly renovated Triangular Park to the people of Kalimpong on 23rd February. The inauguration was part of the Centenary celebrations of the world's largest service organization.

The Club has been given permission for the maintenance and upkeep of the most visible landmark in Kalimpong by the Municipality. According to Rotarian Arun Kumar Zimba, who looked after the renovation work, the project cost a little above RS 80,000.

"The place was a haven for vagabond but now local people and tourists can also relax here. We have spoken to the police officials about restraining lunatics from entering the park," said Bharat Mani Pradhan, a club member, in a press conference at Hotel Silver Oaks.

"It is our sincere effort to beautiful Kalimpong said M.S. Foning, the President of the Rotary Club of Kalimpong. "This is a public property and we urge the general public also to take care of it," he added.

According to club members, their future projects include Audiometry Testing Facility, Functional Literacy for women, Counseling and Vocational training center.

"We are contemplating about having our own building where we can hold a counseling center for youths and students and also a vocational training



center," said Bharat Mani Pradhan. He also said that land for the proposed building has been donated by Ms. Indra Bose, also a Rotarian, at Upper Cart Road. "We have also spoken to the DGHC secretary for funds", he said.

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What is VAT ?

Value Added Tax (VAT)

A Gist of White Paper

The scheme of VAT, as evolved on the basis of a consensus among the States through discussion & deliberations in the Empowered Committee of State Finance Ministers was unveiled by the Union Finance Minister on 17/h January 2005. VAT is slated to come into effect from 1st April 2005. All States have agreed to amend their earlier VAT Bills so as to conform broadly to the common design as elaborated in the White Paper.

Concept

The value added tax is based on the value addition to the goods, and the related VAT liability of the dealer is calculated by deducting input tax credit from tax collected on sales during the payment period (say a month). The essence of VAT is in providing set-off for the tax paid earlier, and this is given effect through the concept of input tax credit/ rebate. This input tax credit in relation to any period means setting off the amount of input tax by a registered dealer against the amount of his output tax.

If, for example, input worth Rs. 1,00,000/- is purchased and sales are worth Rs. 2,00,000/- in a month, and input tax rate and output tax rate are 4% and 10% respectively, then input tax credit/set off and calculation of VAT will be as shown below:

(a)	Input purchased within the month	:	Rs.1,00,000/-
(b)	Output sold in the month	:	Rs.2,00,000/-
(c)	Input tax paid	:	Rs. 4,000/-
(d)	Output tax payable	:	Rs. 20,000/-
(e)	VAT payable during the month after set-off /input tax credit [(d) - (c)]	:	Rs. 16,000/-

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KALIMPONG SPEAKS !!!!!

LAST ISSUES QUESTION-

Are the winter vacations given by the schools in Kalimpong too long??

Out of the 87 respondent, 65 thinks that they are. Only 22 feel that the duration of the holidays are good enough.



Yes 74%

No 26%

This issues question is -

Should Kalimpong have at least one or two Private banks?

Answer in Yes or No by 23th March 2005 and send it to us at

KALIMPONG SPEAKS

HIMALAYAN TIMES, C/O HIMALAYAN STORES, KALIMPONG

OR EMAIL US AT

himalayantimes@rediffmail.com

MUSCLE MANIA IN TOWN

By Staff Correspondent

This one was for the body freaks. The 1st Gorkha Hill Classic Body Building Contest, held at the Town Hall on 27th February, showed the presence of a large number of body builder – seniors as well as aspiring youngsters – in Kalimpong. The contest, organized by Classic Health Club of Gumba Hatta, saw 35 participants from Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Kurseong and Sikkim flexing their muscles.

“Though body building contests are organized on a regular basis, this contest is the first where, apart from the three sub-divisions of

Darjeeling, Sikkim is also participating,” said Ganesh Pardhan, vice-president of Kalimpong-Divisional Body Building Association. “Such contest can tackle the menace of drugs and probably make the society more health-conscious,” said Bhannu Baral, president of classic Health Club.

Bolstered by a boisterous audience, the participants gave their best in each category. Finally, Muhammad Maqbool of Kalimpong stood first, in the 55 kg category and Amar Dukkpa of Kurseong was ranked first in the 60 kg category. Similarly, Suprim Khawas of Darjeeling and Lhamba Phuntshok of Kalimpong won the 65kg and 70kg category respectively. ■



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Secretary Visits Blind School

by Anup Moktan

The International Secretary of the Salvation Army for South-Asia, Commissioner Lalkiamlova, had arrived for a one day visit to Kalimpong on March 4. Comm. Lalkiamlova, who hails from Mizoram, is the first India to hold the post. Soon after arriving here, he, accompanied by his wife, visited the Mary Scott Home and School for the Blind, which is run by the Salvation Army.



COMM. Lalkiamlova, incidently, had stayed in Kalimpong during the 70's when he worked as an assistant in the Blind School." Coming to Kalimpong is like coming home," he said. His area of concern in South Asia include Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, India, Pakistan and the Middle East. He also said that the Salvation Army, which has its international headquarters in London, was doing rehabilitation work in Iraq and Tsunami – affected areas.

The Mary Scott Home and School for the Blind, at 9th Mile, was started by the Scottish Missionary, Dr. Mary Scott in 1939. When working at Sikkim, she

was diagnosed with cataract after which she was inspired to start the school. It was handed over to the Salvation Army in 1956 when Dr. Scott had to leave for her native place due to old age and illness.

At present, the school has classes till std. IV and has a student strength of 24.

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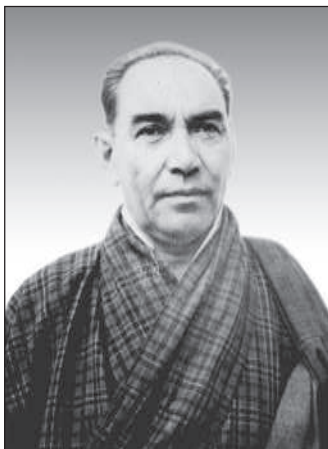
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O B I T U A R Y

Dasho R. N. Dikshit left for his heavenly abode on 22nd Feb. 2005. He was 93 years of age. He was an Alumni of the prestigious S. U..M.I School, Kalimpong. He graduated in civil Engineering from Dhaka Uinvisity , Bangladesh, and started his carrer as an Engineer under C.P.W.D. He was posted in Sikkim which was under the Regime of the then late Chogyal.

On the request of his Late majesty, Jigme Dorjee Wangchuk, King of Bhutan, he along with some senior Engineer were deputed to Bhutan. Dasho Dikshit



was associated with major Road project like the Construction of road from Phuntsoling to Thimpu (179km) including other Roads and Building works throughout Bhutan.

He was the first Indian to have been conferred the title of Dasho by his late Majesty, the then, King of Bhutan for his meritorious services to the Kingdom of Bhutan.

He was instrumental in the formation of the first P.W.D. in Bhutan in the year 1965. He is survived by his wife, three sons and three daughters.

Dear READERS,

With reference to the article "Is Kalimpong Flesh Trade Free?????" in the last issue of HIMALAYAN Times, the management of this newsmagazine want to clarify that the intention behind writing the article was simply to make the citizens of Kalimpong aware of the problem being created by a handful of girls who are a disgrace to our society. The problem has only just begun and we felt that an article at this very initial stage would help nip it at this very stage before it becomes too big to handle. For an example we would like to point out here that a similar article was done in a regional paper a few years back regarding this very trade in Darjeeling which helped create awareness amongst the locals and helped in checking the growth of the trade there. We are very glad the issue has been taken up by some very active and prominent social organizations of the town and we thank them for addressing the issue.

All photographs that were used for the articles were from the Internet.



History
under
HAMMER

Photograph Sandeep Jain

One for the ROAD

or what's left of it
- anmole prasad



Darjeeling, otherwise
drought-stricken
Now sits and fills the potholes
Of her roads with water
And towards evening
This night-blind city
Emerges from these
very puddles

- Manprasad Subba
Varshama Darjeeling

When Subhash Ghising and his motley motorcade of diesel jongs drove into Mela Ground in 1986 to address a general meeting, very few people knew that Ghising was suffering from a severe cold: his weary eyes were watering and both his nostrils were firmly clogged from the long dusty drive across the district. After delivering a lengthy speech that painted a rosy vision of the future of these hills, he issued a call to the people to launch a mass movement called 'mato-ko-andolan'. Or so it sounded, at that time. Nobody suspected for a moment that actually Ghising was calling for a "bato-ko-andolan" – a struggle for the roads. And thus, thanks to the adenoidal vagaries of one man, the history of Kalimpong was changed forever.

It sounds incredible but it's true. Just pinch both your nostrils together firmly and try to say "bato" and if it doesn't sound like 'mato' then tell me. And if that's not enough, go for a walk, or better still, a drive around the rotten roads anywhere within the limits of our autonomous hill council and see for yourself.

But to resume my story: the well-meaning people of Kalimpong, quick to rise to the occasion, launched into an enthusiastic agitation for a separate homeland that began towards the middle of 1986 and lasted for three years; an agitation that was to provoke a sharp and brutal response from the Government of West Bengal: innocent

civilians, many of them poor women, were mowed down in the streets by police gunfire in the infamous incident of the 27th of July 1986. Others found themselves dragged from their beds and locked up for months in various jails all over North Bengal. In one fearsome reprisal, the security forces massacred dozens of ‘militants’ (some of them ailing, elderly citizens) in the Gumba Hatta/Upper Dungra area. The Town Hall was commandeered by the Government and its basement rooms were turned into an interrogation cell with attached torture chambers where manacled and bleeding suspects were held.

With the signing of the ‘Accord’ in 1988, his purpose served, Ghising forgot all about Kalimpong. He was hardly seen this side of the Tista and if at all, it was peering out from the smoked glass window of a white Ambassador that rushed out of town before lunchtime, hot on the heels of a howling pilot jeep.

Ghising’s face faded from public memory, people got on with their lives. The maimed dragged themselves around in improvised prosthetics, the arrested persons, who are to this day plagued with criminal cases from the andolan, hired their own lawyers to rescue them, the PWD rebuilt its razed bungalows, business drifted back in from Kathmandu and Siliguri and slowly Kalimpong limped back to a semblance of normalcy.

But it was back then in 1988, after the ‘Accord’, that the bato-ko-andolan took off in real earnest. It was a slow and insidious movement that took several monsoons to manifest itself. In the beginning, one could barely feel the bumps in the comfortable upholstery of the newly launched Maruti Omni vans but slowly and surely, Kalimpong’s roads began to disintegrate.

Never mind, we said, our Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council is equal to the task. Ghising is going to fetch us pots of money from Calcutta and our streets will soon be paved with gold, just as he promised. But as the years rolled by, nothing of the sort happened. The roads just got worse and worse. The ruts became holes, the holes became potholes and the potholes themselves became trenches that filled with water during the rains.

Never mind, we consoled ourselves, our Municipality is equal to the task. Somehow they’re going to scrounge the funds from somewhere to repair the roads. But by then it was too late: the GNLF had turned its eyes on the Municipalities of Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Kurseong and before you could say ‘Alkatra!’ each of these towns found itself saddled with Municipal councillors of the diesel jonga variety. Side by side, delimitation redefined the boundaries of the Municipal areas, enlarging the maps to include large areas of agricultural land so that urban and rural concerns were hopelessly muddled up in the same civic body. The number of wards increased and so did the number of councillors. Everywhere not just the roads but civic infrastructure itself began to deteriorate rapidly. Main thoroughfares were no exception. Kalimpong’s Main Road, Darjeeling’s Judge Bazar and Ladenla Road, all turned into mule tracks that reminded one of the good old days of the Tibet trade.

In the meantime, party hoodlums received an open general license to occupy reserved roadside land. Not, as they would like to put it, because they were ‘landless’, but because these lands represented the very best of prime real estate that could be flogged off to unsuspecting buyers for lakhs of rupees. Witness the massive encroachment and transaction of PWD lands along Reshe Road towards the outskirts as an example. As usual, the local SDOs and



the Assistant Engineers of the PWD did nothing about it, preferring to look the other way rather than rake up a row before one's transfer orders arrived. At any rate, the Collectorate itself was too busy apportioning the last of Kalimpong's public lands amongst its civil servants and petty bureaucrats to worry about such minor things. And so, as the traffic got heavier and heavier, the roads became narrower and narrower. It was a state of affairs that could, to this day, only be described as leng-feng.

But no, I remind myself. There were some desultory repairs actually made to the roads from time to time. But when? When the Dalai Lama came to town? When the elections were just around the corner? When the original paving from 1920 began to show up on Main Road and it just got too damn embarrassing? In one particularly pitiful instance, a contractor was saddled with the job of patching one of the smaller roads. The work was so shoddy that by the time the man reached one end of the road, the patchwork had already been stripped away from the other. The outraged residents were contemplating the filing of a complaint with the Kalimpong Municipality against him. The outcome of which is still unknown. One wonders if their righteous anger would have been mitigated if the contractor had told them what he'd spent to get the contract.

And so the bato-ko-andolan drags on as roads are stripped bare of their surfaces, of the layers beneath and of the very boulders on which they had originally been laid. Every car becomes a rattletrap in a matter of days no matter how carefully one drives. Every conversation inside a vehicle turns to the appalling condition of the roads and ends with abuse for the ruling party. Every visitor to Kalimpong tells you what a nice place it is – except for the roads.

The usual excuse put forward is the lack of funds. For a moment, let's assume that's true. Even so, the Municipalities could easily maintain a standby crew ready with a few barrels of alcatra and the (presently idle) road roller ready to patch the smallest rut on the street thus preventing it from becoming a pothole during the wet season. The biggest enemy of the road is water, for water enters the crevices of the road surface and destroys it, as any layman would tell you. The Municipalities could also easily clear the drains of all obstruction and keep them well maintained at a negligible cost. Strict bye-laws preventing the laying of water pipes over drains would go a long way in preserving our roads. The use of drains as a place for dumping garbage and waste water has also contributed to the destruction of our roads: a fine example of this is to be seen below the Government Housing colony where a perennial stream of black filthy waste is emptied not only onto the drain but often over the street itself. This notwithstanding that some of the most powerful (and supposedly responsible) officers of the Government are residing in the colony. The Sub-Divisional Officer, ensconced in his villa on the other side of the hill is of course hardly bothered by this. The water distribution networks needs to be regulated, redesigned and revamped in so that the digging of roads to lay pipelines is reduced. The major drains and jhoras leading out of town are required to be kept well maintained and free of obstruction. The use and disposal of plastic has to be reduced by proper legislation and by the introduction of a garbage bin system in every shop and home. All this hardly requires funds; all that it really needs is for the Municipalities, the Government and the people to play a more proactive role, for the enforcement of existing regulations and a more efficient use of the present infrastructure.

But where is the will? After all, there is more money to be made out of destroying a road than from maintaining it. All of us have paid the price of the bato-ko-andolan either by a twisted ankle, a damaged car or even a fatal accident. But what are its profits? One will never know for sure, for the accounts of the Municipalities are shrouded in secrecy, even though the law obliges them to transparency and to an annual disclosure to its citizens. Under the indulgent eyes of a State Government that rules through a satrap, the accounts of the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council are also kept under wraps and never questioned. What has been received for maintaining the roads, what has been spent, what has not, are questions to which there will be no answers so long as the State and Council are in cahoots with each other. The only purpose our roads serve today therefore, is as a monument to our inability to self-governance, to our weak and collaborating leaders, to our corrupt and self-serving bretheren who prevent us from ever becoming a civic society.

A good road is the first index of civilisation. A road is the first point of physical contact between the citizens and the administration. Every time a man steps out of his house in Kalimpong, he curses his luck. The only things that are new about our roads are the names that politicians give them. A man with patched trousers, no matter how ragged, always stands with dignity. And so it is with roads; we don't ask for new ones, even patched ones will do. And I'm afraid as things stand today in Kalimpong, the bum is showing. ■■



Contribution of the SCOTTISH MISSIONARIES in KALIMPONG Socio Economic Change

by. Rev. James Paul Lepcha (Sada)



photograph Chinlop Fudong

When it comes to Socio-economic changes in Kalimpong, the great contribution goes to Scottish Missionaries Guild mission, Dr. and Mrs. J.A. Graham's who were the pioneers of the bringing socio-economic changes in Kalimpong especially among the Lepchas. Dr. J.A. Graham he who first started the silk industry in Kalimpong with the help of British government. During that time silk was one of the most demanded and main source of wealth, also the climate of Kalimpong was most favorable for the cultivation of silk industry. Dr. Graham's cherished the idea that a silk industry might become one of the most natural and beneficial features of the whole mission district. He opined that "bringing silk industry

means much additional prosperity to our people." The silk industry work has developed in Kalimpong and brought socio-economic prosperity to the people. Till today silk industry is one of the main occupation of the people of Kalimpong.

Apart from this, from 1894 onwards, Mrs. Graham started Kalimpong Home Industries for the women. Also the education program for women by opening separate schools for them. The industrial work and education went together. In the beginning she taught them knitting by making socks, silk ties, tea-cloths, bed spreads and other articles from silk which was developed in Kalimpong. The silk crochet materials

When it comes to Socio-economic changes in Kalimpong, the great contribution goes to Scottish Missionaries Guild mission, Dr. and Mrs. J.A. Graham's who were the pioneers of the bringing socio-economic changes in Kalimpong especially among the Lepchas.

which she used to supply to different parts of the country.

With the help of native Christians, missionaries also introduced, poultry-rearing, especially bringing the better variety Turkey rearing breed, on this issues Mrs. Graham observes: 'One of the woman who has been so fortunate in her rearing of Turkey bred poultry, that she has been able to help considerably to put her boy to collage and give him a medical education.'³⁰ This boy became first doctor from Kalimpong (from Lepcha tribe). 1905 onwards the home industry became undoubtedly increase, Mrs. Graham's described it in her own words,

Realizing that, our people were just at the stage in the march of Civilization when an industry like that lace-making might flourish. The Indian hill women are hard working and industrious as a rule, And while field cultivation work is on they do a fair share. To Introduce a suitable subsidiary industry seemed to us to be the Best way of helping them.

For men, the carpentry and wood carving school was started from 1960 onwards. Government also granted the money, and therefore, the work had so quickly progressed. The carpentry work included wood carving, furniture making and because production quality was so



good. Later this work became a self-support under the superintendent of Rev. Evan Mackenzie and Mr. Arthur Lees. Whoever were trained in this carpentry school, they became the most earned people through carpentry works. Besides this, a tailoring has been added and government provided the grant for this branch of industry also. One helpful thing is, while students were learning the carpentry, tailoring they got scholarship

and after the training was over they can start their own business. So large number of people had learned the industry and became self sufficient in running their houses. From then onwards, till today Kalimpong is famous for the arts and crafts home industry, Kalimpong made articles are supplied to all over India.

One of the important aspects which missionaries never forget is that, religious instruction or Gospel preaching while giving industrial training both things went side, with the industrial work, which helped the missionaries to bring many souls to the kingdom of God by changing the socio-economic standard of people of

Kalimpong.

There-fore no community of Kalimpong forgets the contribution and dedication of Scottish Missionaries who made them civilized, educated people and had shown how to live, how to earn for themselves. Missionaries did not concern only for their spiritual needs but also for physical needs of the people of Kalimpong. ■

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Recalling KALIMPONG

by Dr. S.B.Wangyel

Jennifer Fox, a daughter of Darjeeling tea planter, who taught in the Homes for a few years in the 60s and is a keen historian of the region recalled Kalimpong in the following

way: "Described by some as the prettiest hill station in the Darjeeling District and possible in India, Kalimpong is as different from Darjeeling as chalk is from cheese.

Never a resort for the Calcutta fashionable, it was able to develop its own identity as an international hill town attracting peoples from allover the world. I learned to love this town where all the tribes and religions of Asia meet."1 Much before Jennifer was bore another European, passing through Kalimpong, on his way to Tibet wrote: "Kalimpong is a beautiful place; it overlooks the valley of the Teesta, and is within easy reach of it: it has the hum, life and interest in the movement of thinks inseparable from a town on a great highway."2 However, I think the best description of Kalimpong come from the Nelsons who used to bring tourists from the USA to the town. Unlike the archetypal tours of the Indian plainsmen the Nelsons took the tourists to the 10th Mile area and the Yankees watched in amazement small factories making incense stick, the Tibetan thanka painters caoting their canvas with vegetable colours, the noodle factories and many of the tourists were richer and happier especially after purchasing song souvenirs the favourite being the colorful somba or the Tebitan boots that had no left or right sides to them.

Anyway this is how the Nelsons saw Kalimpong: "The scarled poinsettias

scenes that are forever etched on your memory;

palces to be called up when, in the midst of 20th century busy worlds, there is hunger for a simpler life. Kalimpong is one of those scenes ."3



stretch upwards as tall as trees, bamboo frame and earth plastered houses with ochre thatched roofs bid a warm welcome, orchids grow on roadeside trees and geraniums in vibrant shades grace humble courtyards." After having stayed in for sometime this is how they felt: "When you travel there are some

1 Jennifer Fox: *In the shade of Kanchenjunga*, British Association for Cemeteries in South Asia, London, 1993, p. 164.

2 John Easton: *An Unfrequented Highway through Sikkim and Tibet*, The Scholaris Press, London, 1928.

3 Duane and Marion Nelson: *The Travelers Guidebook for Himalaya Arts and Cultural Trip*, Globle Views, USA, 1985, pp. 83 and 82.

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True Friend

Gideon Taso
St. Augustine's School

It sounds funny but has a deep meaning hidden in it.
Grass fades sun sets but a true friend remain the same

Do all get this manger sweet?
Yes.....a fly flew over the sweet
And have at one's finger tips.

My past years were very troublesome
All that beauty all that wealth ever gave
alike await the inevitable hour;
The paths of glory lead but to the grave
I need someone to wipe my tears
Hug me!.....give me a warm kiss.

In my heart there was a longing for infinite
And this cannot be satisfied by anything of time,
anything
In this world but only a "TRUE FRIEND".

He broke my heart with joy
Like dew drops cleaning very leaf in the morning
for a new beginning
The day was cloudy but a bad beginning makes a
good ending.

He slipped into my dark life, lighted my paths and
walked hand in hand with me
Now, this world seems no more as awkward as a
cow on ice
Because the fountain is clearest at its source
Lastly, my experience says,
"All that glisters is not gold"
(Every one cannot become like him).

Forbidden one

by Sisir Karki

I had never expected that
this feeling would come,
For it was a Forbidden one,
I fell in love with you,
You fell in love with me,
And it was such a happy moment in my life,
But time was really selfish,
Promises were broken, Tears fell down
You made us forget each other
That it was only a passing love,
Days passed not seeing me talking to each other,
That made me had so many sleepless night,
I tried to change my atmosphere,
Finding new life and love,
But it still remained in my heart
Wondering if you ever still think of me,
I may have a new love,
Which can give love more than you ever did,
But I just don't know why it always remains
That ever when I don't have you,
You are still the one,
I have been longing for,
And I assure this Love will always be here
But Untie that moment exist, I always pray
That you will be happy and hope you'll
Understand my agony.

Kalimpong quiz

We really are disappointed at the knowledge that Kalimpong has about itself. This is the second time that not a single correct answer was received by us to questions asked in this section. Anyway we hope we have better luck in this issue-

The correct answers to the questions asked in the last issue are-

1. Father Butty
2. Ramesh Sharma
3. Norbu Lama, Norbu Tshering & Hansjit Subba
4. Dr. J. A. Grahams
5. 1948

This issues questions are-

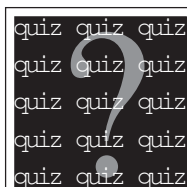
1. Name the founder Director of Rockvale Academy.
2. Where was the State Bank of India previously house in Kalimpong before being shifted to the current day premisus?
3. Who wrote the Book " Lepcha My Vanishing Tribe?"
4. How many Municipal Constituencies are there in Kalimpong?
5. Who was the first Chairman of the Kalimpong Municipality?

Answer the above questions correctly and rush in your answers in a plain sheet of paper alongwith the coupon given below to win a sleek Parker Vector

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jumble jumble

AKBAJM



KLANYUG



MARIYAN



SHITAGIND



SAHIPUPAT



(hint: local Primary Schools)



Complete the above Jumble and send in your entry with the coupon given below by the 24th March 2005 to win a free lunch for two at **Soods Garden Retreat, Kalimpong**. The winner will be decided by a draw of lots.

WE REGRET THAT DUE TO AN ERROR THE JUMBLE PUBLISHED IN THE LAST ISSUE COULD NOT BE COMPLETED BY ANY OF THE CONTESTANTS. THE SAME JUMBLE WILL BE PUBLISHED IN THE FORTHCOMING ISSUE AFTER DUE CORRECTIONS. WE SINCERELY REGRET THE INCONVENIENCE CAUSED

Please submit your entry in a plain sheet of paper alongwith this coupon. Please do not tear this page to submit your entry.



jumble
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Dr. ONGDEN LEPCHA

by Lyangsong Tamsang



Dr. Ongden Lepcha

Charteries Hospital, now known as the 'Sub-Divisional Hospital, Kalimpong', was established in 1893 by the Scottish Mission in Kalimpong. Young men with good educational qualifications from Kalimpong were encouraged and given opportunities to study medicine in the 'Temple Medical School, Patna. Among them, one name stands out-above all others-Dr. Ongden Lepcha. The recipient of the 'Principal's Medal', Temple Medical School, Patna, Ongden passed his medical examination with flying colours. The medal was presented to him by Lieutenant Colonel R.H. Whitwell IMS on 10 April 1905. on completion of his medical course, Dr. Ongden joined and practiced medicine in the Charteries Hospital, Kalimpong.

Plague, a very infectious and fatal disease (Cholera/typhoid) spread very quickly and killed large numbers of people in Kalimpong. It occurred, probably, before the out break of the First World War. Dr. Ongden Lepcha took plunge to save the people of Kalimpong irrespective of caste and creed. He worked day and night. And served many lives; he did. In the process, owing to acute lack and shortage of medicine, he was unable to save his own younger brother. Such unselfish, self-sacrificing, humanitarian was Dr. Ongden Lepcha.

During the first World War, Dr. Ongden Lepcha served in the British Army as a Medical Officer. A row of

his War Medals is a testimony to his War exploits. Dr. Ongden Lepcha returned of Kalimpong after the war with enormous, vast practical experience, knowledge, know how, and understanding in medical care and treatment.

While making rounds in the hospital or visiting his patients in their houses, we are told, his presence alone was suffice, enough to refresh and restore their morale and recover from ill-health. People of Kalimpong had such faith in him. We are also told that he used to give money from his own pocket to his poor, destitute, poverty-stricken patients so that they could have nutritious food including 'Haddi Ko soup' for their speedy recovery. Such kind and generous doctor is rare today. He was a giver in its true sense. Dr. Ongden Lepcha is definitely a pioneer in medicine and social services in the Darjeeling Hills.

Dr. Ongden Lepcha was held in very high esteem by the people of Kalimpong. The common people established and erected a status/bust of Dr. Ongden Lepcha at the Motor stand, Kalimpong, in 1934 in fond and loving memory of this renowned, illustrious, distinguished, and noble citizen of Kalimpong. Mr. Acklain (with due respect-the spelling may be incorrect but the sound is almost there), a sculptor par excellence,



residing at 'Morning Sun', Faom Bong, present day Kumudini Homes, Kalimpong, was assigned and commissioned to carve a status/bust of Dr. Ongden Lepcha by the people. It was fitting that Dr. Ongden Lepcha's status/bust was made in Kalimpong. Mr. Edmund, also known as 'akai Saheb', many of you may recollect, the Manager of Demonstration Farm, Kalimpong, occupied the Morning Sun when Mr. Acklain finally left for England. 'Morning Sun' is still standing; albeit in a renovated form. This is the residence of Headmaster, Kumudini Homes.

The road starting from the present Tri-kon Park, Thana Danra, running through above Mela Ground, Motor Stand, and ending at Daruwa Danra junction was named after Dr. Ongden Lepcha. Proper and correct sign boards, 'Dr. Ongden Lepcha Road' need to be put up, placed, immediately, at the start and middle of the road to pay our due respect and honour to Dr. Ongden Lepcha.

Owing to apathy, indifference, and ignorance, Dr. Ongden Lepcha's statue/bust was removed from the Motor Stand, to Catherine Graham's Park next to Damber Chowk almost two decades ago. When the Tourist Centre was built, constructed at the park, the statue/bust was, once again, removed and it was lying in a corner of a house. This was a humiliating truth.

To keep the record straight, the then Sub-Divisional Officer, Kalimpong, Chairman, Kalimpong Town Municipality and his councilors, and Sub-Divisional Information and cultural officer, Kalimpong, very strongly supported, backed, and agreed to re-establish

Dr. Ongden Lepcha's status/bust at the Town Hall, Kalimpong, when indigenous Lepcha Tribal Association earnestly approached and appealed to them. This was in 2003. The indigenous Lepcha Tribal Association very much appreciate the help and support rendered, given by Mr. Gaulan Lepcha, MLA, Kalimpong Constituency, and Mr. Nim Tshering Lepcha, President, Kalimpong Football Association, in re-established the Dr. Ongden Lepcha's Statue/Bust at the Town Hall.

It is extremely heartening that today, Friday, 15 October 2004, the good citizens of Kalimpong have joined hands and unitedly re-established and unveiled the Statue/Bust of Dr. Ongden Lepcha at the Kalimpong Town Hall, to the greater glory of Kalimpong.

Dr. Ongden Lepcha's Statue/Bust is now, in a safe, secure and commanding place at the Kalimpong Town Hall. The Indigenous Lepcha Tribal Association is confident that Dr. Ongden Lepcha's Statue/Bust will remain intact for the new generations to see, observe, learn, and take pride in one of the great sons of Kalimpong. ■



Dr. Ongden with Family Members

nostalgia



This photograph taken in the late 1920's is of one of the earliest cars in Kalimpong. Photo courtesy Samsher Ali

ON THE CONTRIBUTORS

Anmole Prasad- is a leading lawyer of the region and a highly reputed writer of the Eastern Himalayas

Dr. Sonam B. Wangyel- is a Jaigoan based doctor who is acknowledged as an authority on the history of this region.

Mr. Lyangsong Tamsong- is the leading light of the Lepcha community of the region.

Rev. James Paul Lepcha- is a Christian Priest who has written a theses on the work of Scottish Missionaries

Mr. Anup Moktan- is a student of Kalimpong College who is also a correspondent with Himalayan Times.

Mr. Gautem Lama- is a teacher in Benjamine's Garden School and is a cartoonist with a Siliguri based paper.

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